

the shooting of the drug smuggler constitutes an administrative error that should have been addressed. However, the application of 18 U.S.C. §924(c) to two U.S. Border Patrol agents in lawful possession of their firearms appears grossly inappropriate. Because agents Ramos and Compean were required to carry firearms during the course of their duties, I urge you to consider commuting this 10-year mandatory minimum sentence enhancement.

Mr. President, the end of your term is quickly approaching and time is running out for you to heed the calls of the American people and reverse the grave injustice committed against agents Ramos and Compean. No useful purpose is served by the continued incarceration of these distinguished law enforcement officers. During this Christmas season, a time of peace and thanksgiving for the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ, I urge you to open your heart to the pleas of the American people and commute the sentences of these two Hispanic-American heroes.

Sincerely,

WALTER B. JONES,
Member of Congress.

A response from the White House said that the agents' requests for commutation "are receiving a careful and fair review." If the President takes the time to personally review the agents' case, I am confident the facts will lead him to the same conclusion that the majority of Americans have already reached: The indictments against these men were unjustified.

The President should carefully consider one of the most troubling aspects of this case: The agents were charged under a statute intended for violent criminals carrying guns, not for law enforcement officers acting in the line of duty. Because the border agents were required to carry firearms during the course of their duties, I urge the President to commute the 10-year mandatory sentence for these charges.

Mr. Speaker, time is running out for the President to reverse this grave injustice committed against Ramos and Compean. I pray that he will open his heart to the pleas of the American people and commute the sentences of these two deserving men.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

IT'S TIME TO GIVE DIPLOMACY A CHANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. A breath of fresh air filled the Capitol this morning. It happened during the confirmation hearings for HILLARY CLINTON. The Secretary of State-designate in her testimony said that "diplomacy will be the vanguard of foreign policy" in the Obama administration.

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This is exactly what the American people have been waiting 8 long years to hear. The current administration never used diplomacy, and the results have been devastating for us and for the world. The occupation of Iraq hasn't made us any safer. It has cost over \$1 trillion so far, helping to put our economy into a deep recession. It has devastated our reputation in the world. All of this is clear to just about everyone except our current leaders in the White House.

At his press conference yesterday, President Bush insisted that the occupation of Iraq hasn't damaged America's moral standing in the world. But his administration's policy of shooting first, asking questions later, has badly damaged our Nation's moral authority.

The use of torture has damaged it even more. Yesterday President Bush called the human rights abuses at Abu Ghraib a disappointment. But in recent weeks we have seen convincing evidence that Abu Ghraib was the result of deliberate administration policy. Talk about disappointment.

In February of 2002, the President signed an order stating that the Geneva Conventions did not apply to members of al Qaeda or the Taliban. Then high-ranking American officials took a series of actions that made torture a part of our interrogation practices in Iraq and elsewhere. Former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld was one of the officials who gave his stamp of approval.

A bipartisan report issued by the Senate Armed Services Committee on December 11 documented this illegal action and how these actions came about. According to the committee, the authorization of aggressive interrogation techniques by senior officials conveyed the message that it was okay to retreat and degrade.

Then a week after the committee issued its report, Vice President CHENEY gave a shocking interview to the Washington Times. In the interview, he admitted that 33 prisoners were subjected to what he called "enhanced interrogation techniques." That's fancy bureaucratic language for torture. He even admitted that prisoners were subjected to waterboarding, which has been considered a form of torture ever since the Spanish Inquisition.

I know that conservatives like Vice President CHENEY have looked backwards for their policies, but the 15th century, Mr. Speaker, is much too far back. Look at the consequences of these policies of war, occupation and torture. The Middle East continues to be in turmoil and flames. Iran's influ-

ence continues to spread. People all around the globe have a negative opinion of the United States, which makes it much harder for us to get their help.

When America loses its moral authority, Osama bin Laden and other terrorists find it a lot easier to recruit new members. But with the change in our Nation's leadership on January 20, America has new hope. We have new hope for the future.

In addition to her comments about diplomacy this morning, HILLARY CLINTON said that "We must build a world with more partners and fewer adversaries," and she promised to work with Congress and not to treat us with contempt, as the current administration has. She said, and I quote her, "For me, consultation is not a catchword—it's a commitment."

And she quoted Terence, the Roman playwright, who said, "In every endeavor, the seemingly course for wise (people) is to try persuasion first."

The current administration tried war and occupation for 8 years, and it didn't work, so it's time to give diplomacy a chance.

YOUR HARD-EARNED MONEY BELONGS TO YOU

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, this summer, spring, we sent Americans a stimulus check to help stimulate the economy. We actually gave them some money. We had already spent the money that they had given us for taxes, and so we went and borrowed some money and sent that money to the American people to let them try to stimulate our economy.

Evidently that didn't work as well as a lot of people thought it would, and so now there is a movement to spend much more, larger amount, triple, quadruple the amount of money that was spent this spring. Guess what? We don't have the money, and so we are going to go and borrow it.

So what we are on is this system of tax, spend, borrow. Tax, spend, borrow. It isn't working. The American people know that that's not the right prescription for getting us out of this economic slump. Yet that is the plan that will be brought before this body possibly this week.

This is going to be a big week for your children and grandchildren. We are going to have a \$350 billion second half of the stimulus or the bailout program, and now we are talking about nearly \$1 trillion in new spending for a stimulus package, \$1.3 trillion.

My friend from Texas spoke about the fact that Members from Congress are using their voting cards as credit cards. It's time, actually, for Members of Congress to start using their cards not as credit cards and mortgaging the future of our young people, but investing and beginning to spend money that